

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15
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-----033007 262030Z /72

P R 261015Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5687

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

JCS WASHDC

CINCPAC

CINCPACREPPHIL

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 MANILA 15266

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, RP

SUBJECT: PRESS COVERAGE ON HOLBROOKE TALKS

REF: MANILA 15153

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. MANILA MEDIA COVERAGE OF ASST. SEC. HOLBROOKE'S CONSULTATIONS IN MANILA HAS BEEN PROMINENT, LEAN AND GENERALLY ACCURATE WITH THE EXCEPTION OF AN OVERBLOWN EDITORIAL OR TWO. THE BULLETIN TODAY OF SEPTEMBER 23 CARRIED THE SOMEWHAT MISLEADING HEADLINE "CARTER SEEKS EARLY END TO RP-US IMPASSE" BUT THE TEXT OF THE STORY WHICH FOLLOWED MORE ACCURATELY STATED THAT "PRESIDENT CARTER AGREES IN PRINCIPLE WITH THE VIEW OF PRESIDENT MARCOS ON THE NEED TO RESOLVE OUTSTANDING BILATERAL ISSUES BETWEEN THE PHILIPPINES AND THE UNITED STATES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE."

2. THE JOINT PRESS RELEASE (REFTEL) HAS BEEN THE MAIN FEATURE OF PRESS COVERAGE SUBSEQUENT TO THE CONSULTATIONS. END SUMMARY.

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3. EDITORIAL ACTIVITY DURING THIS PERIOD HAS RANGED RATHER WIDELY. ON SEPTEMBER 23, THE TIMES JOURNALE CARRIED A PIECE BY FRANCISCO DE LEON SURVEYING SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REGION, AND ASKING WHETHER THE PRESENCE OF THE BASES MIGHT NOT INCREASE THE DANGER OF FOREIGN AGGRESSION. DE LEON FURTHER INQUIRES, "WILL THESE BASES

BE ALLOWED TO STOCKPILE NUCLEAR WEAPONS CONSIDERING THE FACT THAT THE PHILIPPINES IS SURROUNDED BY COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE THE ATOM BOMB?"

4. THE DAILY EXPRESS TEODORO VALENCIA DID A PIECE LINKING THE BASE TALKS WITH THE ANTI-MARTIAL LAW MOVEMENT. THE KEY PORTION FOLLOWS:

BEGIN QUOTE. WHY SHOULD DISLIKE FOR MARTIAL LAW MEAN SUPPORT FOR THE CONTINUED DOMINATION OF OUR COUNTRY BY FOREIGN FORCES AND THE DICTATION BY WASHINGTON ON ALL ASPECTS OF OUR NATIONAL LIFE? ARE WE TO BE FREE BY BEING ONCE AGAIN AN AMERICAN COLONIAL CHARGE? I WOULD HOPE THAT IT WERE POSSIBLE FOR THE PROS AND ANTIS OF MARTIAL LAW TO AGREE THAT NATIONAL DIGNITY IS PARAMOUNT AND BEYOND DEBATE IN OUR COUNTRY. BUT THIS IS NOT TO BE SO. NOTHING BUT COMPLETE AMERICAN DICTATION AND ECONOMIC DOMINION WILL PLEASE THE PATRIOTS WHO SAIL UNDER THE BANNER OF THE ANTI-MARTIAL LAW FORCES.

IT WOULD APPEAR, ON THE BASIS OF OUR INFORMATION, CULLED FROM MANILA AND WASHINGTON, D.C., THAT IT IS NOT ONLY THE AMERICAN PRESS THAT IS MISINFORMED AND BIASED ABOUT THE PHILIPPINES. THE U.S. CONGRESS, TOO, IS IN THAT CATEGORY, FED, NO DOUBT BY THE US EMBASSY ESTABLISHMENT IN MANILA. THE AMERICAN READING OF PHILIPPINE PUBLIC OPINION

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IS WHAT THE USIS AND THE CIA FEED TO STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE US CONGRESS. UNDER THIS CLOUD OF MISINFORMATION, WE ARE ABOUT TO START THE BASES TALKS. WE ARE AT A DISTINCT DISADVANTAGE. THE AMERICANS HOLD TOO MANY ACES AND ALL THE CHIPS ON THE TABLE. DON'T BE FOOLED BY THE HONEYED WORDS AND THE HARMLESS WORDING OF THE PRESS RELEASES.

THE FORCES AGAINST A PHILIPPINE POSTURE OF DIGNITY AND INDEPENDENCE ON THE EVE OF THE BASES TALKS MUST COUNT ON THE ORCHESTRATED THREATS AGAINST COLONIAL-MINDED FILIPINOS THAT A POSTURE OF INDEPENDENCE BY THE REPUBLIC COULD MEAN A CUT IN AMERICAN GENEROSITY. CURIOUSLY ENOUGH, THE LEFT-LEANING REBEL ORGANIZATIONS, A GOOD NUMBER OF CHRISTIAN MILITANTS AND MANY OF THE LEADERS OF THE FORMER OPPOSITION ARE ALL LINED UP TO STOP ANY MOVE ON THE PART OF PRESIDENT MARCOS TO DEMAND FAIR RENTALS AND RESPECT FOR NATIONAL DIGNITY. IF THE AMERICAN WILL PREVAILS, IT WILL BE BECAUSE FILIPINOS THEMSELVES ALIGNED WITH THE AMERICANS TO STOP ANY NATIONALISTIC PINNINGS.

THE AMERICANS WILL PRESS FOR EARLY NATIONAL ELECTIONS, THREATEN US WITH ALL KINDS OF MAYHEM IF WE DO NOT YIELD TO THEIR WISHES

ON THE BASES. THE FILIPINO COLONIALS COULD NOT WISH FOR MORE. WHEN YOU COME DOWN TO IT, WE ARE A WEAK AND POOR NATION. THE PRESSURE OF THE UNITED STATES MAY BE TOO MUCH FOR US TO BEAR. WE MAY END UP WORSE THAN WHERE WE ALREADY ARE -- I HOPE THE "PATRIOTS" WHO ARE PUSHING THIS THROUGH WILL BE HAPPY. THE AMERICANS ARE USING THEM TO OBTAIN WHAT THEY WANT. WITH EXCELLENT CHANCE OF SUCCESS.

WE'RE NOT IN THE SAME BARGAINING POSTURE AS THE PANAMANIAN. WE CAN'T THREATEN TO BLOW UP CLARK AIR BASE OR FORCE THE AMERICANS TO ABANDON SUBIC. THERE ARE TOO MANY FILIPINOS WHOSE LOYALTY TO THE UNITED STATES MAY BE MORE THAN THEIR LOYALTY TO THEIR COUNTRY--PATRIOTS OF THE OLD VARIETY. WE CAN'T THREATEN TO GET AID FROM THE SOVIET UNION OR CHINA BECAUSE UNCLASSIFIED

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OUR PEOPLE ARE BASICALLY ANTI-COMMUNIST BY REASON OF THEIR RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND AND BELIEFS. THE ONLY WAY WE COULD WIN IN OUR FIGHT FOR NATIONAL DIGNITY IS IF ALL OUR PEOPLE WERE TO SUPPORT OUR DEMAND FOR RECOGNITION OF OUR SOVEREIGNTY. BUT THAT'S SOMETHING A SIZEABLE NUMBER OF FILIPINOS WILL NEVER SUPPORT-- THEY THINK THEY'RE BETTER FILIPINOS IF THEY TAKE THE AMERICAN SIDE AGAINST OURS.

ELECTIONS? WE WANT THAT. HUMAN RIGHTS? WHO'S AGAINST THAT? DEMOCRACY? THAT HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE NATIONAL YEARNING. WHEN THE AMERICANS SAY THEY WILL NOT CATER TO THE SUBVERSIVES IN OUR COUNTRY, THEY APPEAR LIKE KNIGHTS IN SHINNING ARMOR FIGHTING FOR HUMAN FREEDOM AND THE RIGHTS OF MAN. BUT THEY'RE ALSO ABOUT TO GET AWAY WITH IT VERY CHEAPLY. BY PLAYING ONE SECTOR OF THE FILIPINO PEOPLE AGAINST THE OTHER, THE AMERICANS WILL BE ABLE TO STAY AND PAY WHAT THEY WANT, UNDER TERMS THEY WANT. AND STILL APPEAR AS LIBERATORS. END QUOTE

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5688

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

JCS WASHDC

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5. DAILY EXPRESS OF SEPTEMBER 25 CARRIED FOLLOWING EDITORIAL:
BEGIN QUOTE. ASSERTING RP SOVEREIGNTY. CASE AGAINST WHAT
MAY BE TERMED AN ERA OF THIRD WORLD ASSERTION, THE EXPLORATORY
TALKS BETWEEN PRESIDENT MARCOS AND US ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF
STATE RICHARD HOLBROOKE A FEW DAYS AGO SIGNIFY THE PERSISTENT
ATTEMPTS OF THE COUNTRY TO BREAK LOOSE FROM THE REMAINING
SHACKLES OF AMERICAN COLONIALISM AND TO ESTABLISH A BILATERAL
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES ON AN EQUAL FOOTING.

THE MEETING IS DEEMED MOST SIGNIFICANT IN THE SERIES OF
PRELIMINARY TALKS BETWEEN THE RP-US PANELS BEFORE THE
RENEGOTIATIONS OF THE MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS IN
NOVEMBER THIS YEAR. THE PHILIPPINES IS ASKING FOR REVISIONS
IN THE MILITARY BASES AGREEMENT, MUTUAL DEFENSE PACT, AND
MILITARY ASSISTANCE TREATY WHICH HAVE PROVEN ADVERSE TO THE
COUNTRY'S INTERESTS. A NEW TRADE TREATY IS ALSO BEING HAMMERED
OUT TO REPLACE THE LAUREL-LANGLEY AGREEMENT WHICH EXPIRED IN
1974.

IN A MESSAGE TO THE PRESIDENT THROUGH HOLBROOKE, US PRESIDENT
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JIMMY CARTER EXPRESSED AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE THAT THE REMAINING
ISSUES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES BE SETTLED SOONEST-A POSITION
SIMILARLY HELD BY THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT.

TRANSLATING THIS INTO MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE AND BENEFICIAL
RESOLUTIONS IS SOMETHING ELSE, HOWEVER. THOUGH CLEARLY A
FUNCTION OF INDEPENDENCE AND SELF-DETERMINATION, THE PHILIPPINES
DEMAND FOR SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE US MILITARY BASES HERE IS EXPECTED
TO ENCOUNTER ROUGH SAILING IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.

SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE BASES WOULD MEAN PHILIPPINE JURISDICTION
OVER CRIMES COMMITTED BY US PERSONNEL ON THE BASES, A FILIPINO
BASE COMMANDER, AND THE FLYING OF THE PHILIPPINE FLAG OVER THE
MILITARY AREAS. SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT WOULD REMOVE CONSTANT
IRRITANTS OVER THE CASE JURISDICTION BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE PHILIPPINE POSITION ON THE US PAYMENT OF RENTALS OR DEFINITE COMPENSATION FOR THE USE OF THE RESERVATIONS CAN ONLY BE DEEMED A FAIR AND JUDICIOUS STAND. ANYTHING SHORT OF THIS INFRINGES ON THE INVIOABILITY OF PHILIPPINE TERRITORY.

THE UNCOMPROMISING STANCE TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE ISSUE OF SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE BASES BOLSTERS THE PHILIPPINE RESOLVE TO ASSERT ITS INDEPENDENCE DESPITE COVERT AND MANIFEST PRESSURES FROM ITS FORMER COLONIAL MASTERS.

AFTER ALL, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS IN THIS ERA OF ASSERTION CAN ONLY BE NURTURED BY MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE AND BENEFICIAL TIES BASED ON GENUINE RESPECT AND FRIENDSHIP.
END QUOTE.

6. SEPTEMBER 25 DAILY EXPRESS ALSO CARRIED FOLLOWING COMMENTS BY VALENCIA: BEGIN QUOTE. HE PAPERS SAID THAT PRESIDENT MARCOS
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MET WITH US UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE RICHARD HOLBROOKE ON HOW TO SETTLE "PENDING PROBLEMS" ON MUTUAL DEFENSE, BASES AND TRADE. WHAT REALLY HAPPENED WAS THAT THE AMERICAN MESSENGER TOLD THE PHILIPPINES THE AMERICAN "CONDITIONS" FOR ANY KIND OF AGREEMENT. WE ASKED FOR THE REVISION BUT THEY'RE TELLING US THEIR TERMS, ON AN "OR LESE" BASIS. THE REALITY OF LIFE IS THAT WHEN A PYGMY DEALS WITH A GIANT, LOGIC AND FAIRNESS ARE SIDE ISSUES. SIZE IS AN OVERWHELMING REALITY...

NOTES: THE NEW AMERICAN AMBASSADOR TO THE PHILIPPINES IS EXTPECTED OCT. 15. HOPEFULLY, THE BASES TALKS WILL BE RESUMED THEN. WHO, AMONG OUR PANEL OF NEGOTIATORS IS IN A POSITION OF STRENGTH TO STAND UP TO AMERICAN PRESSURE? ...THE AMERICAN SIDE IS VERY SELF-CONFIDENT. THEY HAVE FULL BACKGROUNDERS ON EACH AND EVERY MEMBER OF OUR PANEL AND KNOW THE WEAKNESS OF EACH ONE OF THEM... THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT, CONGRESS AND STATE, KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT CONDITIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES. BUT IT IS IN THEIR INTEREST TO PRETEND TO BE UNINFORMED OR MISINFORMED, THE SAME WAY THE AMERICAN PRESS INSISTS ON LIES INSTEAD OF THE TRUTHS THEY KNOW--THE BETTER FOR BARGAINING PURPOSES... HOW CAN SOME OF OUR COUNTRYMEN SO OPENLY SUPPORT THE RETENTION OF AMERICAN EXTRATERRITORIAL RIGHTS WHILE AT THE SAME TIME SWEAR BY HUMAN RIGHTS? DON'T NATIONS HAVE RIGHTS TOO? END QUOTE.
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